



equidem

GLOBAL
LABOR
JUSTICE
G
ILRF
INTERNATIONAL
LABOR RIGHTS
FORUM

Executive Summary

"We work like robots"

Discrimination and Exploitation of Migrant Workers in FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 Hotels



Copyright © 2022

Equidem

Global Labour Justice - International Labour Rights Forum (GLJ-ILRF)

Equidem is a human rights and labour rights charity working globally and locally to promote the rights of marginalised communities, accountability for serious violations, and building the human rights movement. Our team of experts and field investigators expose injustice, provide solutions for the most intractable human rights challenges and work closely with grassroots and global civil society to empower the individual and the community.

Global Labour Justice-International Labour Rights Forum (GLJ-ILRF) is a new merged organisation bringing strategic capacity to cross-sectoral work on global value chains and labour migration corridors. GLJ-ILRF holds global corporations accountable for labour rights violations in their supply chains; advances policies and laws that protect decent work and just migration; and strengthens freedom of association, new forms of bargaining, and worker organisations.

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License. You are free to copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format pursuant to the following conditions. (1) Attribution: You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use. (2) Non-Commercial: You may not use the material for commercial purposes. (3) No Derivatives: If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you may not distribute the modified material. To view a complete copy of the license, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-ncnd/4.0/legalcode>.



equidem



Executive Summary

“

For nine months, we were made to work for more than 12 hours a day, without a day off. In order to keep our hours hidden, we were prevented from clocking in and clocking out. I was on the verge of going insane.”¹

AN INDIAN WORKER AT THE HOLIDAY VILLA HOTEL AND RESIDENCE, DOHA, QATAR - A FIFA WORLD CUP QATAR 2022 PARTNER HOTEL.



¹ An Indian worker employed at the Holiday Villa Hotel and Residence, Doha, Qatar. Interviewed in June 2022.



Here, the salary is not about what you bring to the table. I will never get the same salary as an Arab colleague. There is a lot of discrimination against people from Africa. We are only hired in some types of jobs - security, housekeeping, the kitchen.”²

A GHANAIAN WORKER EMPLOYED AT CROWNE PLAZA, THE BUSINESS PARK, DOHA, QATAR - A FIFA WORLD CUP QATAR 2022 HOTEL PARTNER.



We are in direct contact with guests, so female housekeeping staff are not allowed to work alone. We work in pairs-male and female staff together. We do not enter any rooms without a colleague. Housekeeping work is risky-we might get assaulted or accused of stealing. We have to be very careful.”³

A NEPALESE HOUSEKEEPING WORKER AT THE CROWNE PLAZA, WEST BAY, DOHA - A FIFA WORLD CUP QATAR 2022 HOTEL PARTNER.

Migrant workers from Africa and Asia employed at FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 hotels⁴ have been subjected to serious labour exploitation and human rights violations. Investigations by Equidem and GLJ-ILRF between February 2020 and July 2022 documented significant labour and human rights violations at 13 out of 17 of FIFA partner hotel groups. In this report, women and men from Africa and Asia working at Qatar World Cup hotels describe - in their own words, the

sexual harassment, nationality- and gender-based discrimination, wage theft, health and safety risks, sudden loss of employment, and illegal recruitment charges they faced in their work. The legal and governmental context fuels these rights violations: Workers are denied the fundamental right to associate, subjected to intensive surveillance and employer control, and fear retaliation-including employer-instigated deportation - for defending their rights and interests.

2 A Ghanaian worker employed at Crowne Plaza, The Business Park, Doha. Interviewed in June 2022.

3 A Nepalese worker employed at the Crown Plaza, West Bay, Doha, Qatar. Interviewed in April 2022.

4 We refer to hotels whose services are or have been offered for sale at hospitality.fifa.com as part of the FIFA Official Hospitality Programme by “FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 hotels” or “FIFA World Cup hospitality partners” and similar language.

These conclusions follow from our in-depth investigation of migrant workers’ employment conditions at FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 hotels and GCC-region hotels belonging to FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 multinational hotel partners. 80 migrant workers were interviewed across 32 hotels, including 54 workers employed at hotels belonging to 13 of 17 FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 partner hotels. The Accor, Dusit, Ezdan Holding Group, InterContinental, Kempinski, Marriott, Movenpick, Retaj, Ritz, Rotana, Steinberger, Tivoli, and Wyndham hotels investigated employ an estimated 9,000-10,000 workers. Many are migrant workers from Bangladesh, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Morocco, Nepal, the Philippines, Thailand, and Uganda.

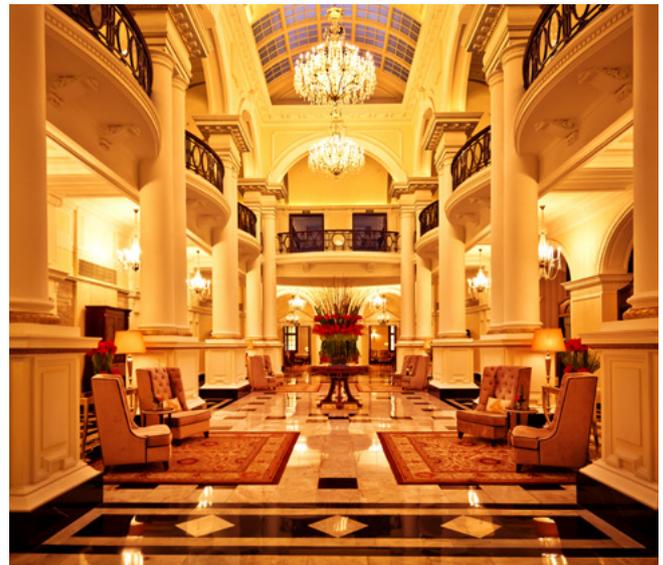
These violations of workers’ rights at FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 partner hotels are the predictable result of policies that deny workers their right to associate, permit discrimination based on nationality and migration status, and grant employers control over migrant workers’ rights to move and work, exposing them to discrimination and abuse. As FIFA well knows, Qatar has a “de facto caste system based on national origin, which results in structural discrimination against non-citizens, including as the result of immense power imbalances between employers and migrant workers rooted in the kafala system that historically structured labour relations in Qatar,” according to a UN special rapporteur’s April 2020 finding that the FIFA Human Rights Advisory Board’s included in its closing report.⁵

5 Fifth Report by the FIFA Human Rights Advisory Board, February 2021, available online at: <https://digitalhub.fifa.com/m/4769eb55b4e22ba5/original/vforeieiz1fh06ld4a36-pdf>.



Addressing the problems identified by our investigation requires the dedicated efforts of the State of Qatar, FIFA, and the multinational hotel groups hosting World Cup guests. Primary responsibility for establishing and effectively enforcing labour rights compatible with international minimums lies with states. However, FIFA acknowledges its own responsibility to uphold workers’ rights in its own operations and those of its event partners.⁶ The multinational hotel groups’ own responsibility to provide decent work must too be acknowledged, along with their power to set and enforce standards in their capacities as hotel owners, operators, and franchisors. Our investigations demonstrate that while some multinational hotel groups have anti-racism and anti-discrimination policies and enforcement plans, they have failed to protect migrant workers at FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 hotels from racism, discrimination, and abuse.

Qatar has made improvements in its labour regime following its 2010 selection as host of the 2022 FIFA World Cup. Equidem and GLJ-ILRF urge the state to continue its work towards international minimum standards for its over 2 million migrant workers in the years following the Cup. Working with the International Labour Organisation since 2018, Qatar established a non-discriminatory minimum wage, developed an electronic payment system to promote timely and full payment of wages, and established some procedures to identify and remedy violations of workers’ rights. New laws have blunted some of the harshest features of the kafala system, allowing migrant workers more freedom to change jobs without employers’ permission. Qatar, Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia have taken some similar measures to curb employers’ control over workers. Despite recent reforms, significant challenges to implementation and enforcement remain in Qatar and elsewhere, as this report documents.



6 FIFA’s Human Rights Policy, May 2017, available online at <https://digitalhub.fifa.com/m/1a876c66a3f0498d/original/kr05dqyhw1uhqy2lh6r-pdf>.

Where workers lack the freedom to associate and act collectively, initiatives led by the state, FIFA, and its hotel partners will remain inadequate to provide decent work or address the discrimination and abuse migrant workers suffer. Significant power imbalances between workers and employers will continue to obstruct the exercise and enforcement of migrant workers’ rights under domestic and international human rights law. The law of Qatar, particularly its ban on migrant worker unions, denies workers the freedom to protect their own rights and interests, undermining its workers’ rights initiatives.

More than one million fans and tourists are anticipated at the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022. Over the course of the 28-day tournament, they will stay in

up to 130,000 rooms in hotels belonging to these 17 multinational hotel groups and others. These global games have the potential to promote respect for human rights not only in the establishments hosting teams and fans, but throughout the hospitality industry and the hotel networks operated by the 17 multinational hotel groups discussed here. Equidem and GLJ-ILRF wrote to FIFA, the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy, the Qatar authorities, and all of the businesses mentioned in this report prior to publication. Representatives of Accor and Marriott provided responses in relation to their hotels mentioned in the report. Their responses are available in full here: <https://www.equidem.org/reports/we-work-like-robots/responses>.

Table 1: FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 Team Hotels and Rights Violations

FIFA TEAM	HOTEL	Rights Violations
Brazil	Westin Hotel, Doha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationality-based wage discrimination • Higher wages promised upon hiring • Recruitment fees
England	Souq Al-Wakra Hotel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationality-based wage discrimination and discrimination in promotion • Challenges obtaining NOCs for contract workers • Recruitment fees charged to contract workers • Illegal wage deductions below minimum wage • Exposure to COVID-19 despite workplace precautions

Nationality and Gender-based Discrimination

Equidem and GLJ-ILRF confirmed nationality-based wage discrimination at all 32 of the hotels associated with FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 hotel partners that we investigated, evidencing nationality- and race-based hierarchies among the estimated 9,000-10,000 workers at investigated

hotels. Hospitality workers also reported unequal remuneration due to discrimination based on gender and other axes of exclusion. While Qatar has a newly enacted non-discriminatory minimum wage, nationality- and gender-based wage discrimination flourishes above that wage floor.

Article 1 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) expressly prohibits state exclusion based on national origin that nullifies or impairs human rights. Nevertheless, nationality-based wage discrimination in the hospitality sector across the GCC states is widespread, systematic, and carried out in plain sight. The same is true of gender-based discrimination which ILO Convention 190 condemns. FIFA should have taken immediate action to address these predictable risks by demanding its partner hotels adopt non-discrimination policies and establish wage scales based on job requirements, rather than on workers’ nationality, migration status, or gender.

A Bangladeshi worker at the Centro Capital, Al Jazeera Street, Doha in Qatar - a FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 partner hotel - described nationality-based wage discrimination:

Superiors make hiring decisions based on nationality rather than experience. For the same bellboy job, an Arab worker will be paid more than us. Here, Bangladeshis are paid less. We fear for our jobs, and we have to tolerate unfair decisions.⁷

The hospitality workers interviewed routinely reported that westerners, Qatari nationals, and Arabic speakers were paid more than Asian and African workers.

When specific salaries were reported, pay discrepancies between different nationalities were drastic, including for this Nepalese migrant worker employed at the Westin Hotel, Doha, Qatar - a FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 hospitality partner expected to host the Brazilian team:

My salary does not reflect my skill level; it reflects my nationality. Filipina women are paid 1600 (Qatar) rial (\$439) for the same work where we are paid 1000 rial (\$274).⁸

A Westin representative denied nationality-based discrimination at the hotel.

An Indian worker employed at Souq Al Wakra Hotel - the host hotel for the England team - also reported nationality-based discrimination in promotions:

Here, they give preference to Arabic speakers when it comes to promotion.⁹

Another worker employed at the Retaj Al Rayyan Hotel, Doha, Qatar - a FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 partner hotel - explained:

Your job is tied to your nationality. If you are from Bangladesh or Nepal, then you can't expect a senior position, even if you have the qualifications. In this hotel, only Egyptians are given promotions.¹⁰

At the Holiday Villa Hotel and Residence in Doha, Qatar - another FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 partner hotel - workers described wage, hiring, and assignment discrimination against African workers. A Ghanaian worker described his experience at this hotel:

Here, the salary is based on nationality rather than experience. Regardless of our experience, African people are only hired in security, housekeeping, and in the kitchen.¹¹

Another worker from the same hotel explained:

People hired from Africa are paid 200 (Qatari) rial (\$55) less than other staff members with the same jobs.¹²

7 A Bangladeshi worker employed at Centro Capital, Doha, Qatar. Interviewed in April 2022.

8 A worker employed in the food and beverage department at the Westin Hotel, Doha, Qatar. Interviewed in May 2022.

9 An Indian worker employed at Souq Al Wakra Hotel, Doha, Qatar. Interviewed in July 2022.

10 A worker employed in the front office of the Retaj Al Rayan, Doha, Qatar. Interviewed in June 2022.

11 A worker employed at the Holiday Villa and Residence, Doha, Qatar. Interviewed in June 2022.

12 A worker employed as a concierge at the Holiday Villa Hotel and Residence, Doha, Qatar. Interviewed in June 2022.

Wage Theft

Hotel workers employed by FIFA hotels partners reported wage theft lasting from two to nine months. Some workers received no wages and benefits or smaller wages and fewer benefits than they were owed. Some had their salaries unilaterally cut by between 25% and 75% or were required to work overtime without compensation. These practices violate international labour standards under the ILO Protection of Wages Convention, 1949 (No. 95), which provides for the regular payment of wages, including upon termination.

At the Holiday Villa Hotel and Residence, Doha, Qatar - a FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 partner hotel - workers reported mandatory and unpaid overtime hours that they were banned from recording. One worker explained:

For nine months, we were made to work for more than 12 hours a day, without a day off. In order to keep our hours hidden, we were prevented from clocking in and clocking out. I was on the verge of going insane.¹³

Workers across departments at the Souq Waqif Boutique Hotel, Doha, Qatar - a FIFA World Cup

Qatar 2022 partner hotel - described being required to work overtime without receiving payment for the time worked at any rate. An Indonesian housekeeping staff member explained:

We work six days a week, for 9-12 hours a day. We work three hours of overtime at least three times a week. They never pay us overtime.¹⁴

At hotels associated with FIFA partner hotel groups, workers reported non-payment and underpayment of wages - especially during successive phases of the COVID-19 pandemic.

An Indian worker employed at Souq Al Wakra Hotel - the host hotel for the England team - reported suddenly losing his job with the outbreak of COVID-19 and receiving no severance pay:

During the pandemic they fired many staff. They told us that within 1 month we are going to fire you. They paid our tickets to our home countries and gave workers they fired QR 400 (USD \$110) to pay for food until their flight. They did not provide any other payments.¹⁵

Understaffing, Overwork, and Abuse

Migrant workers employed at FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 hotel partners reported understaffing and overwork, especially in housekeeping departments. Understaffing and overwork heighten the risk of verbal abuse and workplace violence for hotel workers. A Bangladeshi worker at the Holiday Villa Hotel and Residence - a FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 hospitality partner - reported routine verbal abuse based on his nationality:

Our supervisor shouts at us all the time. For any small issue, he shouts and threatens to fire us. I continue to work in these conditions because I am afraid to lose my job. We feel discrimination in this workplace. There are very few Bangladeshis working in this company, and we are shouted at more than other workers.¹⁶

Verbal abuse is a form of workplace bullying, and if left unchecked can escalate into physical violence.

13 An Indian worker employed at the Holiday Villa Hotel and Residence, Doha, Qatar. Interviewed in June 2022.

14 An Indonesian worker employed at Souq Waqif Boutique Hotel, Doha Qatar. Interviewed in June 2022.

15 An Indian worker employed at Souq Al Wakra Hotel, Doha, Qatar. Interviewed in July 2022.

16 A Bangladeshi worker at Holiday Villa Hotel and Residence, Doha, Qatar. Interviewed in June 2022.

At the Ezdan Palace Hotel, Doha, Qatar - a FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 hotel partner - contracted workers in the housekeeping department reported that they were significantly understaffed for the work required, creating high levels of pressure. One worker explained:

There is no way that the number of workers matches the workload. In fact, we are short by half the number of workers required to do the job efficiently. We have to clean 10 rooms in 8 hours. The challenge is the rooms are not all empty at once. It depends on the check-out time of the guests. If our work is not completed on time, we have to work overtime, which means the company will have to pay us for overtime duty. They do not want that. Rather, there is huge pressure for us to complete our work within the working hours.¹⁷

Understaffing and overwork were also reported by workers at the InterContinental Doha, West Bay - another FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 hotel partner.

A worker, hired directly by the hotel, described overwork in the housekeeping department:

We never get enough rest or sleep when the hotel is busy. We work like robots without food or water continuously, sometimes for 15 hours during peak season. From associates to the management level, if the hotel is busy, we have to stay. We are not paid for these extra hours.¹⁸

At the JW Marriott Marquis City Centre, West Bay, Doha - a FIFA World Cup Partner Hotel - workers in housekeeping described the cumulative toll of working long hours on overnight shifts. A Bangladeshi worker employed by a contractor explained:

I have worked the night shift for the last three years. Sometimes it is very difficult for us to complete all the work assigned to us. Sometimes the supervisors shout. Continuous night shifts using cleaning thinner and chemicals has negatively impacted my health.¹⁹

Gender-Based Violence and Harassment

Our investigation indicated that gender-based violence and harassment (GBVH) is a fact of life for women at some FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 hotel partners. Forms of gender-based violence named by Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) General Recommendation No. 19 include acts that inflict physical harm, mental harm, sexual harm or suffering, threats of any of these acts, coercion, and deprivations of liberty, including restrictions on freedom of movement. ILO Convention 190, which entered into force in June 2021, reflects global agreement that GBVH has no place in the workplace.

Women workers described sexual harassment from colleagues. A Nepalese housekeeping

worker employed at the Crowne Plaza, West Bay, Doha - a FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 hotel partner explained:

We get sexual remarks from our colleagues often. They tease us. I get comments like, ‘wow, you look so sexy today,’ or ‘your makeup is superb - my heart is swooning,’ sometimes they touch us inappropriately while working together. I cannot say anything because if I do, they will say that it was unintentional, and they will dismiss me. I just ignore comments and advances.²⁰

Guests also perpetrate sexual harassment and violence against hotel workers. At the InterContinental Doha, West Bay - a FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 hotel partner - women from the hospitality department

17 A worker employed in the Housekeeping Department at the Ezdan Palace Hotel, Doha in Qatar. Interviewed in April 2022.

18 A worker employed at the InterContinental Doha, West Bay, in Qatar. Interviewed in June 2022.

19 A Bangladeshi worker employed in Housekeeping at the JW Marriott Marquis City Centre, West Bay, Doha. Interviewed on June 11, 2022.

20 A Nepalese worker employed at Crowne Plaza, West Bay, Doha, Qatar. Interviewed in, April 2022

reported routinely facing sexual harassment from guests, including inappropriate touching and sexual propositions. These events were described as common experiences in the industry, not isolated incidents.

In some hotels, women could not securely report incidents to supervisors. Workers at the Crowne Plaza, West Bay, Doha described a hotel policy of replacing female with male housekeeping workers when guests behaved inappropriately.

Women workers also described hotel policies restricting female workers’ mobility during work hours and at their accommodations.²¹ A Nepalese worker employed at the Crowne Plaza, West Bay, Doha - a FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 hotel partner - explained:

As a woman, I face discrimination based on my gender. I have many examples. We have to let security at our accommodation know any time we leave, even if we are going to the supermarket. This does not apply to male workers. We have to report the time we will return to the hotel or the accommodation and inform security. If male workers stay out - even all night - and then report for their duty directly, no one will question them. We have to be at our accommodation camps by 9 pm, even on our days off.²²

In a context in which forms of GBVH are socially sanctioned and normalised, FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 hotel partners must proactively establish effective protection measures to provide women employees a work and living environment free of such harms.

Health and Safety Risks

Equidem and GLJ-ILRF found that across the region, hotels exposed their staff to extreme health risks during the successive waves of the COVID-19 pandemic, denying workers their fundamental rights. In May 2022, the ILO recognised that the right to “a safe and healthy working environment” is fundamental, meaning that all ILO members are obligated to promote and respect that fundamental principle.²³

Each of the 80 hotel workers Equidem and GLJ-ILRF spoke to across the 32 hotels investigated knew of someone from their workplace who had contracted COVID-19. In some cases, COVID-19 spread rapidly among hotel staff. In most cases, hotel workers who fell ill were taken to government hospitals and then quarantine centres. While some workers had access

to health insurance and health services through their employers, others, even within the same hotels, did not.

A Bangladeshi worker at the Mövenpick Hotel West Bay in Doha, Qatar - a FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 partner hotel - described pressure from management to work against his will at the risk of exposing himself and other workers to COVID-19 before vaccines were released on the global market:

The (Qatari) government booked the whole hotel for COVID-19 patients. Management offered us work with salary. If we refused to work, we would still receive food and accommodation, but no salary. At first, many of us refused to work. Then we received serious pressure from management to work.²⁴

21 Gender-based restrictions on mobility are another form of GBVH, per CEDAW General Recommendation No. 19 - one that is systematically perpetrated against women hotel workers in Qatar.

22 A Nepalese worker employed at Crowne Plaza, West Bay, Doha Qatar. Interviewed in April 2022.

23 “ILO Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998, amended 2022)”, available online at: <https://www.ilo.org/declaration/lang--en/index.htm>.

24 A Bangladeshi worker employed at the Movenpick Hotel West Bay, Doha. Interviewed in June 2022.

At this hotel, receiving wages was made contingent upon accepting high levels of exposure to COVID-19. Accor, owner of Mövenpick hotels, said that assignments were changed to avoid redundancies and that numerous precautions were taken to prevent the spread of disease.

Workers at the Crowne Plaza, West Bay, Doha, Qatar - a FIFA World Cup 2022 partner hotel - reported that almost 40% of hotel employees contracted COVID-19. Workers who continued to report for duty during the pandemic described not only risks to their wellbeing

but also adverse effects on their mental health as they watched their colleagues fall ill.²⁵

An Indian worker employed through a contractor at Souq Al Wakra Hotel - the host hotel for the England team - also reported an outbreak of COVID-19 among his colleagues, despite workplace precautions:

We followed the Qatar government rules. We maintained social distance and used face masks and sanitisers. At least 20-25 of my colleagues contracted COVID-19.²⁶

Abusive Workforce Downsizing

When FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 ends, over one million fans and tourists will leave the country. Emptying an anticipated 130,000 hotel rooms, the end of the games will significantly change hotel occupancy. Our research found that when hotel demand ebbs, migrant workers often experience abrupt layoffs and terminations with dire consequences for their ability to support themselves.

Our investigation documented a pattern of abrupt termination, ad hoc downsizing, lack of notice prior to termination, and denial of termination benefits at FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 partner hotels, and at hotels associated with the same multinational hotel groups in Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE. These practices disproportionately impacted migrant workers.

At the Holiday Villa Hotel and Residence, for instance - a FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 partner hotel - a Ghanaian worker explained:

I was laid off because the hotel reduced staff during the (COVID-19) pandemic. They did not give me any notice or (severance) payment. I reported for duty, and they simply told me to return to the accommodation. Three weeks later, I was laid off.²⁷

In some cases, hotels linked to FIFA multinational hotel group partners were shut down entirely, and hundreds of workers lost their jobs at once. An Indian housekeeping supervisor, employed at the Voco Dubai hotel in the UAE, described the distinct impact of rapid downsizing on workers from different demographics.

Almost 200 staff members were terminated without prior notice - that is almost 30% of the staff. They terminated workers who did not complete school and did not hold professional positions first. These changes in payroll mainly impacted migrant workers.²⁸

25 A Nepalese worker employed at Crowne Plaza, West Bay, Doha, Qatar. Interviewed in April 2022.

26 An Indian worker employed at Souq Al Wakra Hotel, Doha, Qatar. Interviewed in July 2022. Other workers employed at this site estimated that infections ranged from 12 to 25 workers, but in the absence of publicly available information or a response from the hotel on this issue we cannot assess whether this represents the total number of infections at the site.

27 A worker formerly employed at Holiday Villa Hotel and Residence, Doha, Qatar. Interviewed in June 2022.

28 An Indian worker employed at the Voco Dubai, UAE. Interviewed in January 2021.

Recommendations

I. Urgent Action FIFA Can Take to Protect Labour Rights in the Hotel Sector

A. Call for Immediate Action from Hotel Partners

Equidem and GLJ-ILRF welcome FIFA’s efforts to promote human rights, including by encouraging national football associations to do their own due diligence on hotels in Qatar. Multinational hotel groups have unique capacity to set and enforce industry standards in the hotel sector. This includes not only the ability to ensure that their hotel partners abide by multinational branding and service standards, but also that all workers employed in their hotels are protected by fair employment contracts, rigorous assessment to mitigate labour and human rights risks, and adequate remedy procedures to address labour and human rights harms.

Call for FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 hotel partners to immediately adopt and enforce labour and human rights due diligence and remedy standards in Qatar and across their regional hotels

FIFA should require its multinational hotel group partners²⁹ to immediately adopt rigorous labour and human rights standards, processes for ensuring that these standards are achieved across all properties, and effective processes for remediation in cases of rights violations.

1. Require all partner hotels to affirmatively demonstrate compliance with international labour standards, especially in high-risk areas, and require hotel partners prepare and fund responsible workforce downsizing plans and practices. FIFA partners should be encouraged to undertake regionally informed approaches to identifying and remediating discrimination, wage theft, understaffing and overwork, workplace violence and harassment and occupational safety and health.
2. Contribute to emergency funds, and require contributions from subcontractors, that are sufficient to ensure provision of owed wages, severance pay, relocation costs health insurance, and on-site emergency health care.
3. Establish health standards for workplaces and employer-provided housing, including robust COVID-19 protocols to manage potential future outbreaks, measures to ensure that workers are not pressured to risk their health to keep their jobs and systems that secure high-quality medical care to all workers who do fall sick on the job.
4. Address regional risk factors and draw from good practices in the region in developing effective protocols and practices to protect workers’ rights consistent with international conventions and standards.

29 See supra note 4.

B. Call for Immediate Action and Long-term Reform from Qatar

1. Call on the Qatar to address the range of rights violations facing migrant workers in inspections, during, and after the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022

FIFA’s local partner for delivery of the Qatar World Cup infrastructure, planning and operations, the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy has been actively auditing the hotel sector. A Kenyan worker employed at Souf Al Wakrah Boutique Hotel - a FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 hospitality partner - described regular government inspections:

They come frequently and unexpectedly without being identified as government officials until they have left. They will come and look at the rooms, the services offered, and working conditions and then leave.³⁰

As they continue to undertake planned hotel inspections, the Qatar Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy has a critical role to play in ensuring labour and human rights standards are enforced. The Committee should ensure that planned labour rights inspections include the following:

- A.** Processes for identifying and remediating wage discrimination, wage theft, understaffing and overwork, workplace violence and harassment, and health and safety risks
- B.** Responsible workforce downsizing plans and practices
- C.** Engagement with migrant workers in a manner that enables workers to share their concerns while protecting workers’ privacy and safeguarding workers from retaliation

2. Call on Qatar to commit to recognising the freedom of association and workers’ right to join or form a trade union irrespective of nationality, identity or background

The persistent discrimination and rights violations documented here cannot be ended without action by the state of Qatar to enshrine the fundamental rights to associate, organise, and bargain collectively. These rights are the cornerstone on which real reform must rest. Through freedom of association, workers may identify common goals and create an organisation capable of pursuing them, bringing worker power to bear on a consistent basis to transform workplace relationships. Fully protected and empowered workers’ organisations provide a worker-led platform for advocating for internationally recognised workers’ rights, securing their enforcement, and remaking workplaces marred by the products of power imbalances - discrimination, abuse, and other workers’ rights violations.

Qatar’s recent work on joint labour management committees with the ILO represents a first step towards recognising the power of workplace cooperation, but recognition of workers’ fundamental right to associate remains distant. Absent substantial reforms to protect the independence and empower workers’ organisations, these cooperative efforts threaten management subversion of workers’ organisations. They do not provide the protections from anti-union discrimination, among other employer actions, that workers need to exercise their full freedom of association.

30 A Kenyan worker employed at Souq Al Wakrah Boutique Hotel, Doha, Qatar. Interviewed in June 2022.

FIFA should call on the State of Qatar to extend its leadership in the region by recognising and implementing the rights to associate, organise, and bargain as defined by the ILO.

3. **Call on the Qatar authorities to support the establishment of a genuinely independent Migrant Worker Centre**

Given the extreme power imbalances between migrant workers and employers in Qatar, migrant workers are at significant risk for discrimination and exploitation.

The nationality-based racial hierarchies in Qatar, moreover, are entrenched by policies that deny migrant workers paths to long-term residency or permanent citizenship.

In this context, migrant workers require forums for collective action to safeguard their rights and promote their interests. Establishing a genuinely independent Migrant Worker Centre in Qatar is a key first step towards advancing freedom of association and creating a modern, rights-respecting labour system in Qatar.

II. Recommendations for FIFA to Improve its Performance on Human Rights Beyond the World Cup Qatar 2022

Include detailed guidelines for all sectors engaged in providing World Cup services, including but not limited to the hotel sector

1. Looking past 2022, we call on FIFA to be consistent with September 2018 recommendations from the FIFA Human Rights Advisory Board, issue sector-specific guidelines and procedures for enforcing labour and human rights standards across all sectors engaged in providing World Cup services, including but not limited to the hotel sector.
2. Issue guidelines to address nationality-and gender-based discrimination, wage theft, understaffing and overwork, workplace violence and harassment, health and safety risks, and sudden loss of employment.

III. Guidance for Qualifying Teams and Spectators in Selecting Hotels at FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022

Reports documenting human rights violations against migrant workers in Qatar have put football teams on high alert, with players from teams including Germany, the Netherlands, and Norway protesting against human rights abuses. As qualifying teams and spectators select their hotels for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, they have an opportunity to improve working conditions for migrant workers in the hotel sector.



1. As you select your hotel for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, let hotels you consider know that their human and labour rights track record is important to you in determining where you will stay.
2. Before making your booking, check whether the hotel takes adequate measures to safeguard the rights of migrant workers.
3. After making your booking, check whether the hotel is enforcing measures to safeguard the rights of migrant workers.



Questions to ask the hotel prior to and after booking

Wages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have transparent salary grades that determine wages based on objective criteria, including responsibilities, skills, and experience? • Are all of your workers paid in full on a timely basis, including for overtime hours worked? • Can you produce proof that all of your workers are paid in full in a timely manner through WPS documentation of wage transfers?
Hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many hours a day do employees work? • How many breaks are they given, and how long are break times? • Do employees have a choice on whether or not to work overtime? • Do you pay workers for any overtime hours they work?
Occupational health and safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What measures do you have in place to safeguard employees from contracting COVID-19? • Do you provide health insurance for all of your employees? • Do all of your employees have access to medical care and paid sick leave? • What are your emergency health protocols in case a worker becomes sick or is injured at work?
Living conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does your hotel provide workers with accommodation? • If yes, how many workers share a room? • What measures do you have in place at worker accommodation sites to safeguard workers from the spread of COVID-19 in the instance of another outbreak?



equidem

 /equidemresearch
 @equidemresearch

T +44 (0) 203 154 3904
E info@equidem.org

Kemp House
160 City Road
London EC1V 2NX
United Kingdom

www.equidem.org

Designed by optimadesign.co.uk



 @GLJHub
 @ILRF

Global Labor
Justice-International
Labor Rights Forum
1634 I St. NW
Washington, DC 2006
United States